

GRANDMAS OF TODAY

THEY KEEP IN THE RACE WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE END.

The Old Fashioned Grandmother, the One Who Placidly Sat in the Chimney Corner Darning Stockings, Is a Thing of the Past.

I was bemoaning the fact that I had never known my grandmothers. One died before I was born and the other when I was a few months old. I thought it would be so comforting to have a grandmother because they always regarded their grandchildren as being incapable of doing wrong. At least they were sure to multiply one's virtues and minimize faults. Their chief object in life, as I picture them, was to minister to their descendants' comfort, to make the crooked places straight. The grandmother of my fancy would keep my clothes in repair, darn the stockings, knit plenty of washings and silk mittens, surprise me with my favorite dishes, laugh at my jokes and generally submerge her life in the affairs of mine. What was I going to do in return for all this unselfish devotion? I would be her granddaughter. That, according to the old traditions, was quite enough compensation.

I was holding forth, exploiting my views and desires on the grandmother question in the presence of one of those people who delight to take a person down and make him feel cheap, especially if they imagine one is posing as younger than the family Bible records. This individual spoke up and said: "Why, if your grandmothers were living they would be so aged that they would be mummified. Instead of darning your stockings, knitting your mittens, they would be blind, deaf and imbecile. You would have to tend them with greater slavishness than a mother a newborn babe, and without the sweet recompense in the latter case. When people become imbecile with age, they grow repulsive, and the prolonging of this state is dreadful, while each day the unfolding of a budding life is filled with mysterious delights."

Of course I did not want a grandmother that was deaf, blind and imbecile. I thought I would drop the subject, as it appeared to be getting personal. But my companion continued: "Besides, could it be possible in the order of things for you to have a vigorous, industrious, capable grandmother, she would not be sitting at the chimney corner darning your stockings. She would be out attending to her lodge or club business, visiting the millinery openings, ordering a fashionable gown, playing cards or attending a high tea. The old fashioned grandmother is as much a thing of the past as the spinning wheel, the canalboat, stagecoach, making candles and family rendered soap."

I protested that I did not believe my grandmothers would be of the modern pattern. I had heard my mother tell often of how completely her mother lost her taste for society and outside affairs after she had grandchildren. She had raised a large family, but these reproductions were just as much a delight as had been the originals. She infinitely preferred their society to that of grown people. Their prattle, school experiences, little ambitions, filled her life completely. She was constantly planning surprises for them by making animal cakes, individual pies, candy, aprons, hoods, doll clothes.

"Yes, but if she lived now she would be different. The air she would breathe is filled with assertive germs which declare that every woman owes it to herself to have a career and stand at the helm and steer it to the very end. She must not allow her life to be submerged in that of her own children, as they make their appearance rather unwelcome frequently, but must have outside missions. As soon as her offspring is married off, which is accomplished with as great dispatch as diplomacy can secure, then she is free to carry out her schemes and natural desires untrammelled."

"Perhaps you are right," I replied. Such a grandmother as this would be no comfort to me as a grandmother, while she might be a most helpful friend, and I could be proud of her position in the literary, artistic or philanthropic world as her tastes might dictate her pursuit.

A grandmother of my acquaintance said to me not long ago: "It would be a great trial to me to have my grandchildren or any children in the house with me now. I could not adapt myself to their demands and interruptions. I have raised my family and now want my time for individual pursuits." This woman has special talents and necessities for using them, and in her case these feelings may not seem unnatural. But this is much the sentiment that possesses the grandmothers of the age who have no special missions or vocations outside the domestic circle. If they have means, they buy handsome gifts for their grandchildren and wish them to have all the advantages possible that do not represent personal self sacrifice or curtailment of freedom of action.

Women are imbued with the spirit of the age, which demands that there shall be no old ladies with caps and sunshades who stay at home and guard the fireside, but that they must keep in the race with the young people to the very end—Susan W. Ball in Terre Haute Gazette.

Betrayed by His Feet.
Sherlock Holmes—I have not looked around, but a very tall man just came in and sat down in the opera chair behind me.

Miss Marvel—It is true! Say, you do the most wonderful things. Now, tell me how you know without looking at the tall man's presence.

Sherlock Holmes—His feet are sticking through under my chair.—Ohio State Journal

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Queer Timepieces Owned by Two of England's Queens.

Among the treasures of a Swiss museum, inserted in the top of an old fashioned pencil case, is the tiniest watch ever constructed. It is only three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, and its little dial not only indicates hours, minutes and seconds, but also the days of the month. So perfectly formed is this lilliputian watch that it keeps excellent time and is a marvelous piece of mechanical workmanship.

Two of the most elaborate and curious watches which the world has ever seen belonged to Queen Elizabeth and her unfortunate contemporary, Mary, queen of Scots. Good Queen Bess had a watch made for her in the form of a duck, with beautifully chased feathers, the lower part of which opened. The face was of silver, with an elaborate gilt design, and the whole was kept in a case of brass, covered with black leather thickly studded with big silver knobs.

The ill-fated Mary was the possessor of a watch in the form of a skull. The dial was introduced where the palate should have been, and the works occupied the place of brains in the cranium. In the hollow of the skull, moreover, was a bell which had works of its own and by means of which a hammer struck out the hours upon it.

One of the choicest rarities of the Bernal collection was a book shaped watch. This curious time indicator was made by order of Bogislaus XIV, Duke of Pomerania, in the time of Gustavus Adolphus. On the face of the book, where the dial of the watch is set, there is an engraved inscription of the duke and his titles and armorial bearings, together with the date, 1627. On the back the engravings are also very finely and skillfully executed, among them being the portraits of two gentlemen of the seventeenth century. The dial plate is of silver, chased in relief, while the insides are beautifully chased with figures of birds and foliage. The watch has two separate movements and a large, sweet toned bell. At the back, over this bell, the metal is ornamentally pierced in a circle, with a dragon and other devices, while the sides are pierced and engraved with a complicated design of beautiful scroll work.—London Tit-Bits.

DR. BYLES STOOD GUARD.

It Was a Thanksgiving Day, and the Cause Was Urgent.

One of the most famous of the old Puritan divines was Dr. Mather Byles, who was born in Boston in 1706 and who was the first pastor of the Hollis Street Congregational church, to which he ministered for more than 40 years.

Dr. Byles was famous as a humorist and wit, and innumerable anecdotes are related of his clever quips and retorts. He was a zealous Tory and warmly advocated the cause of "the mother country" against the colonies. In November, 1777, he was arrested as a Tory, tried, convicted and sentenced to be confined on board a guard ship and sent to England with his family within 40 days. The sentence was afterward commuted by the board of war to confinement in his own house, a guard being placed over him with instructions not to permit him to leave his residence for a moment under any circumstances.

On Thanksgiving morning, observing that the sentinel, who, like many of the colonial soldiers, was a simple rustic, had disappeared and that Dr. Byles himself was pacing up and down before his own door with a musket on his shoulder, the neighbors crossed the street to inquire the cause of this singular spectacle.

"You see," said Dr. Byles, "I begged my guard to let me go out to procure some cider with which myself and family might celebrate Thanksgiving day, but he would not permit me to stir. I argued the point with him, and he has now gone to get the cider for me on condition that I keep guard over myself during his absence."

Actors Who Stutter.

It would seem that the stage is not only the last profession that would be chosen by a person afflicted by stuttering, but that a stutterer would never dream of selecting that profession. Yet it is a fact that some well known actors and singers labor under this disadvantage.

The strangest thing about it is that the sad impediment which is so painfully evident in private life seems to vanish entirely when they are on the boards.

It is curious that appearance on the stage or in the pulpit should have this beneficial effect, for stutterers in other walks of life do not lose their impediment when at work, however enthusiastic their love for their profession.—London Answers.

Victoria Got Her Primrose.

"The following little anecdote, told by Queen Victoria herself, will show her independence of character," says a writer in The Century. "Very fond of primroses and finding none in the royal gardens, she sent word to have some planted. The gardeners, the queen said, made many objections, and, finding shortly afterward that her wishes had not yet been carried out, she dispatched a messenger inquiring the reason. 'I suppose Queen Anne had none,' she said, 'so they did not think it proper for me to have any, but I sent them word promptly that Queen Victoria would have some—and she did.'"

A Financial Quicksand.

"Would you like an increase of salary, Mr. Smith?"
"No; it's no use."
"No use?"
"If I had more money, I'd have to pay more debts."—Detroit Free Press.



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